

## **STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

The New Hanover County Board of Education recognizes the right of employees to participate in political activities. Such rights include the right to vote, the right to be active members of a political party of their choice, the right to campaign for candidates, and the right to seek, campaign for, and serve in public office provided there is no local, state, or federal law prohibiting specific employees from seeking political office.

An employee, upon request to the Superintendent and the Board, will be granted a leave of absence without pay for the purpose of serving in the North Carolina General Assembly or the United States Congress. An individual will be hired to fill the vacancy on a temporary basis until the employee returns to his/her regular job.

An employee, upon request to the Superintendent and the Board, will be granted release time from school-related duties when serving in a city or county political office which only involves being away a brief period of time such as a few hours or an occasional day. Teachers granted such release time shall pay for a substitute teacher used in their place if a per diem is paid to them for serving in the office. If no per diem is paid to the teacher, the Board shall pay the substitute teacher for the brief period of time.

School system employees shall not (i) while on school system premises or on school system time, campaign, collect funds or distribute material in connection with political activities, or involve students in political affairs or (ii) use school system equipment, supplies, mail service or other modes of communication for political affairs. Nothing in this Policy shall prevent an employee from engaging in political activities on school premises during times and at places where non-student groups are using school system premises for political meetings, rallies or other political purposes.

Nothing in this Policy will be interpreted to restrict the teaching of political issues or the dissemination of information about serious problems of the school system or community. However, both sides of political issues must be presented so that students will have an opportunity to be well informed and they, in turn, will be in a position to make their own decisions regarding political issues.

In compliance with federal laws, New Hanover County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

CROSS REF: Policy 6420 Political Activities on School Property or Using School System Modes of Communication

Adopted: 11/21/72

Revised: 04/09/91, 07/12/11